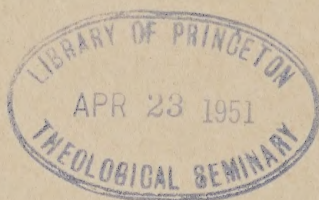



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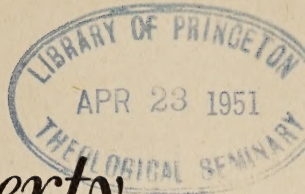
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CALIFORNIA'S BELOVED SON

Thomas Starr King is one of two Californians commemorated in the Congressional Hall of Statuary in Washington, D.C.

Thomas Starr King



Apostle of Liberty

STARR KING IN CALIFORNIA

BY

Arnold Crompton



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*There are some men who, when life's
journey is broken for a little while, accomplish
more than all the rest who carry on the pattern
of their labors uninterrupted.*

One of these was Thomas Starr King.

TO
MRS. CHARLES A. HART, DEAN JOSIAH R. BARTLETT,
AND ALL MY COLLEAGUES ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE STARR KING SCHOOL FOR THE MINISTRY,
THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

IN THIS SCHOOL, WHICH BEARS THE NAME OF
CALIFORNIA'S "APOSTLE OF LIBERTY,"
THEY ARE ENDEAVORING TO LEAD YOUNG MEN INTO
THAT BROAD HUMANITARIAN MINISTRY
WHICH WAS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE LIFE OF
THOMAS STARR KING

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Preface

It may seem strange that in California's centennial year — which marks not only the state's entry into the Union but also the establishment of Unitarianism in the West — I should be offering a biography of the man who saved the state for the Union. Surely his name should be on every tongue. Yet such has been the rapid march of events in the last few years, and such have been the truly titanic changes in the West, that few of the heroes of the early days are now properly remembered.

In the Oakland Unitarian Church there is a bust of Thomas Starr King. Often when a stranger sees it, he asks, "Who's that?"

"Starr King!" we answer.

"Starr King? What did he do?"

This book gives an answer. I have chosen to emphasize his times as much as his life because the two are inseparable. Starr King came to the West at what we would now call "the psychological moment." His ministry ended as its climax was reached. Few have such a privilege.

At intervals in the last four years I have followed into the interior of the state many of the routes which were once his routes on his intense and exciting preaching and lecture tours. I have learned from old Californians the impact of the Starr King legend.

My gratitude goes to the many men and women who

have followed clues for me; to Mrs. George F. Patterson of The Starr King School Library; to Mr. Frank S. Brezee of the Bancroft Library; to my mother and father, who encouraged me to "keep to this knitting" when other goals seemed at the moment more interesting; and, finally, to the members of my church who have kept my study hours sacred, "because the preacher's writing a book."

ARNOLD CROMPTON

Oakland
California

APOSTLE OF LIBERTY

I

Turbulent California in Mid-Century

*Warfare, gold rush, politics, and lawlessness set
the stage for Thomas Starr King's adventures
in the romantic land of California*

FROM THE VANTAGE POINT of the present, the past often seems slightly ridiculous. The quarrels of bygone years, which excited men to the peak of self-sacrifice, appear dull or even unnecessary. Men themselves lose something of their grandeur, and the legends surrounding them fall apart, leaving parched skeletons of reality which offer little to stimulate the imagination.

The present has quarrels of its own which the past could neither envision nor forecast — though in moments of prophetic urging it tried. The quarrels of the present consume our allegiance, because we vaguely sense that the future is being shaped in their midst. And the future is the magnet for human hopes.

Yet out of the past come intimations of the strength and the power and the nobility in man which the crises of the present urgently demand be expressed. So we turn to the skeletons that remain to us, and try to re-create the living flesh which covered them. A measure of understanding

comes. The present falls into its proper place in time, and the future holds greater promise than we had dared to expect.

In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, when the federal republic of the United States of America was still young, Americans were grievously divided among themselves on the issue of slavery. The division was so deep, the quarrels so bitter, that civil war alone could bring a definitive solution.

Although the Civil War can be interpreted as the logical conclusion of intricately interwoven motives and events, touched by nervous sparks of personality, to us who now live there is pathetic tragedy in the fact that it occurred. Why would anyone have doubted that slavery would pass away in a land founded in freedom, and nurtured in a faith in the dignity and moral worth of man?

There are frequently chasms between what people believe and what they do. And sometimes other objectives, less honorable, are carefully hidden beneath that issue which challenges the emotions.

In the three score years and ten which stretched from the inauguration of Washington to the eve of the Civil War, the nation passed from a puny, frail republic nestled close to the Atlantic seaboard to a tremendous country spanning the continent — the leader of the Western Hemisphere, conscious of its “manifest destiny.”

Yet even as the frontiersmen were pushing forward on their westward trek, changes in the structure of civilization itself were being effected which were to prove more revolutionary than anything which had happened to the human race since the earliest years known to the writers

of the human story. The inventive genius of man had been let loose in a world which welcomed it. Steam was being harnessed in engines to serve factories and ships and railroads. Electricity had been captured in the telegraph. And men of vision, heroes and villains alike, realized the empire of power stretching before them in a vast new nation of infinite natural riches, possessed of the means of communication and transportation necessary for the exploitation of those riches.

Ancient rivalries and new quarrels burned brightly. Slavery was their camouflage. It was sufficiently a realistic issue in itself to hide the others effectively. Whoever won the war about slavery won the war to control the manifest destiny of the United States of America.

Into the struggle — as a pawn, as a prize, as an enemy or ally — came California, a quiet agrarian province of Mexico which stretched for nearly a thousand miles along the Pacific Coast.

As early as 1835, before slavery had grown to be the nation's consuming controversy, President Andrew Jackson attempted to extend the western border of the United States to San Francisco Bay. Realizing that Mexican control over California was inadequate, and knowing that France and Britain and even Russia were hungry for a Pacific empire there — the Monroe Doctrine notwithstanding — "Old Hickory" geared his foreign policy to the acquisition of the coast's finest harbor. America's prosperous China trade and whaling industry had stakes in his diplomacy.

Jackson failed, not so much through his own weaknesses as through the blunders of his agents. But henceforth

California was prominent in American foreign policy. The next ten years saw the nation's leaders carefully planning the course of manifest destiny.

Martin Van Buren, the next President, moved cautiously, making no direct attempt to acquire California, but keeping Congress alert to conditions there.

John Tyler sought to obtain the province by a treaty — which tried too hard to be “all things to all men.”

James K. Polk was willing to follow the pattern of peaceful diplomacy. Yet, at the same time, he had no objection to war when diplomacy proved unsatisfactory. His ambition was inflamed by the adventures of the “Pathfinder,” John C. Frémont. His fears were heightened by the softly repeated rumors about Britain's program for the conquest of California. His courage was strengthened by the turn of events in Texas which was to bring that successful rebel from Mexican rule into the American union during the first year of his administration, 1845.

That same winter a revolution erupted in Mexico which capitalized on the strong anti-American public opinion that had been smoldering a long time. Peaceful negotiations for the acquisition of California, or for the settlement of any of the other vexing issues which existed between the United States and Mexico, were now impossible.

On May 11, 1846, President Polk appeared before Congress to ask for a declaration of war against Mexico. He got it, in spite of some Northern opposition which considered the zeal for expansion merely an excuse for the spread of slavery.

On June 14, American settlers in California, impatient

and impetuous, raised the "Bear Flag" at Sonoma, and declared the province an independent republic.

Commodore John D. Sloat, in command of the United States Pacific fleet, sailed into Monterey harbor to prevent any intervention by the British. On July 7, he raised the Stars and Stripes over the Custom House and proclaimed the annexation of California.

The Bear Flag Republic collapsed and most of its fighters joined Frémont's "California battalion."

War with Mexico continued for more than a year. Except for a sharp but brief revolt against the Americans in the Los Angeles countryside, the battles were not fought in California. The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, negotiated on February 2, 1848, ended hostilities. Mexico agreed to cede California and New Mexico and all the territory between, accepting the Rio Grande boundary. In return the United States paid \$15,000,000 in cash and agreed to satisfy the claims of American citizens against Mexico.

The quiet days in California were over. But it was not the war which ended them, or the spoils of war. A magnet stronger than good harbors and rich farm lands drew thousands of immigrants across the wilderness of a continent in which nature and the savage Indians conspired against them. Eight days before the terms of the treaty were agreed upon, James Marshall, constructing a saw-mill at Colma on the American River, observed particles of yellow metal along the tailrace.

Partly through greed, but mostly through fear of the consequences of a gold rush for his personal commercial empire in the Sacramento Valley, John Sutter — Mar-

shall's employer — tried to keep news of the discovery a secret. From the beginning too many men knew about it for silence to last.

By the end of May, gold fever was burning. In mid-summer thousands of young men already in the West deserted their original jobs to begin their diggings.

The excitement spread eastward. The last message of President Polk to Congress, December 5, 1848, officially announcing the discovery of gold, was the clarion call for the stampede of the Forty-Niners. Ships from New England transported Argonauts by the long and dangerous route around Cape Horn. The little village of San Francisco suddenly grew into a rough-and-tumble city of tents. As the fever raged some of its victims dared the shorter route through the disease-ridden swamps of the Isthmus of Panama, while others risked the overland route of desert, plains, and mountains, though guides were few and information concerning trails was unreliable. Death and suffering marked the journeys. But still young men came by the tens of thousands.

Not everyone traveled for gold at the mines. Those who panned the sand and gravel of the rivers and streams, those who dug the soil and rock of the mountains, needed food and clothes and tools and amusement when the days grew weary and hard. Enterprisers came to fill those needs — for a price.

Politicians, also, turned westward to seize one of the richest prizes ever precipitated into ambitious hands. A new land, unexpectedly proving to possess incalculable wealth, attracting hordes of people more interested in fortune-hunting than public welfare, made an opportunity for every man who longed for the power that came

with manipulating the affairs of government. The scum of sordid politicians whom the eastern states were glad to disgorge mingled with leaders of noble character whose aim was to shape a great state out of the once quiet, alien province.

Congress, immersed in severe quarrels of its own, delayed establishing a civil government for California. The impatience of the old settlers and the demands of the incoming Forty-Niners reached such a tense pitch that the military governor, General Bennett Riley, issued a call for a territorial constitutional convention to meet in Monterey on September 1, 1849.

When the convention met, its forty-eight youthful delegates sidetracked the idea of territorial government and proceeded immediately to frame a state constitution. After settling the boundary of California along its present lines, they tackled the question which was keeping Congress in turmoil, and had been brought westward across the Sierra Nevadas.

While the Mexican War raged, James Russell Lowell in "The Bigelow Papers" had taunted:

'Twouldn't suit them Suthun fellers,
They're a dreffle graspin' set,
We must ollers blow the bellers
When they want their irons het. . . .

They jest want this Californy
So's to lug new slave-States in
To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
An' to plunder ye like sin.

Now the delegates in Monterey faced the issue squarely.

Lights burned late in the house of Jessie Benton Fré-

mont that September. Daughter of Missouri's famed Senator Thomas Hart Benton and wife of the "Pathfinder," she was never afraid to be part of any political battle for what she believed to be right. And Jessie Benton Frémont wanted to see the end of slavery. While her husband struggled in Colton Hall to keep California free, she arranged those informal suppers and discussions so necessary to strengthen wavering delegates and to plan the strategy of the firm. She received her victory. Into the new constitution went the statement: ". . . neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, unless for punishment of crimes, shall ever be tolerated in this state."

Freedom was law, but the slavery interests did not relax. They were not to admit defeat until Thomas Starr King had driven the last rivet welding California forever to the Union, and the Union had crushed the rebellion.

Congress was annoyed at the "highhanded" action of the Californians who had established their state, set up their government, and settled their slavery question without so much as a hint of an enabling act from Washington. Some of the excited lawmakers wanted to rebuke the vulgar upstarts as an example to the rest of the West. Their colleagues, however, started the machinery for recognition. Nearly a year was to pass before the new state was welcomed into the Union — a year in which the lines between North and South became sharper and the clouds of civil strife grew more menacing.

But this was to prove the year of compromise. Henry Clay, Stephen A. Douglas, and Daniel Webster risked their strength and their political fortunes in the desperate effort to save the states from armed brutality. For more than eight months the violent debate was carried on,

punctuated with moments of high oratory. Webster delivered his "Seventh of March" speech which swung public opinion to peaceful ways, but earned him the bitter condemnation of the abolitionists. Mourned John Greenleaf Whittier:

All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!

Finally, in the late summer, the issues were resolved. War was averted. The first law in the great Compromise admitted California to the Union as a free state. That was on September 9, 1850. The next day John C. Frémont and William M. Gwin formally took their places as United States Senators from the new state. The California voters had not waited for the action of Congress: on the heels of their constitutional convention, they had proceeded to elect their officials.

Meanwhile in San Francisco, rapidly becoming a city of wood and brick, some of the New England immigrants came together to organize one of the instruments of freedom they had known back home, a church — the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco.

The Compromise of 1850 did not end the slavery controversy in the United States. It did not attach California firmly to the Union. Ten vigorous, brutal, tumultuous years were ahead for the young state.

San Francisco, in one brief and sudden moment, sprang into being and grew strong. Gateway first to the gold fields of the Sierras and, then, as these were beginning to decrease, gateway to the silver mines of Nevada's Sun

Mountain, she gave harbor to the hundreds of ships from the Atlantic seaboard and the strange, often ancient, vessels from far-away lands — England and France, Chile and Peru, Australia and China. Time and again, fire leveled great areas; but quickly the merchants rebuilt. With her people coming from every variety of humanity, she was a place at once pretentious and squalid, high-minded and immoral, cultured and savage, where churches and gambling houses competed for prominence.

Bandits, gamblers, and gangsters, as the decade moved on, learned to be the real rulers. The sun never set, it was said, without bringing a man to his death from a dagger or a bullet. Briefly, in 1851, a Vigilance Committee drove out the worst of the rogues. But when the excitement diminished, they filtered back.

The struggle for law and order in San Francisco was to prove California's first real test of strength between the men of the North and the men of the South.

With gold their magnet, the teeming multitudes cared little for the affairs of state. Justice in the mining towns was simple and swift — a hangman's noose or a driver's whip. What went on in Sacramento, the new capital, or in San Francisco, the commercial center, was nobody's business — that is, nobody except those practical politicians who came to grasp California as a prize for their factions back East.

Colonel Edward Baker was one of those who came; he was Abraham Lincoln's friend, a Union man and an abolitionist. David C. Broderick came, a Democrat, graduate of Tammany Hall; he was to fight his way into control of the party, but though he compromised with the slavery men, he was never one of them. David S. Terry came, a

Southerner, a violent pro-slavery man; he was to become a Justice on the State Supreme Court. William M. Gwin came, an aristocrat from the South, perhaps the strongest advocate of slavery the state ever knew.

The Democratic Party quickly gained control of the state after the Constitutional Convention of 1849. Only Frémont's personal popularity secured him this senatorial seat. His was the short term, and the Democrats held the legislature; they did not send him for a second term. Gradually the pro-slavery wing achieved power. Only Broderick stood in their way — a master politician whom they could not unseat. He became a mountain of strength to all the men of the North, the Whigs and the Democrats alike. They ranted against his unscrupulous methods, but they cheered his goal and achievements. Almost to the end of the decade he remained in power.

By 1855, crime firmly controlled the affairs of San Francisco. Corruption infested the courts. Elections were openly manipulated. Scandals broke over government expenses and public-works contracts. But the people of the city — the businessmen in particular — remained unconcerned. They were too absorbed in their own affairs, too concerned with building their fortunes.

Then, late in the year, came a financial panic. The terror and anguish it brought gave James King of William, crusading editor of the *Bulletin*, the chance for which he had been waiting.

In bitter, vitriolic articles he attacked the politicians. Calling them by name, citing specific instances, he exposed one public official after another. County Commissioner James P. Casey, accused of being a former inmate of Sing Sing Prison, turned upon the editor, first with a

challenge to a duel which was spurned, and then with an open threat of murder. About five o'clock on a damp, foggy evening, at a deserted street corner not far from the editor's office, James P. Casey made good his threat.

Almost immediately the temper of the city changed. Outside the office building where James King of William lay dying, a mob gathered. Towards midnight a rumor made its way among the angry people: the Second Vigilance Committee was forming! By morning the rumor was truth.

James P. Casey, captured from the jail where he had sought refuge, was solemnly tried for his life. As the funeral cortege of the murdered editor moved from the Unitarian Church, the bell on "Fort Gunnybags"—where the Vigilance Committee met—told; and from an improvised scaffold, the assassin plunged to his death.

For awhile longer the Vigilance Committee continued its grim work. Careful to avoid excesses, proceeding with deliberate fairness, it gradually cleaned the city of its undesirable inhabitants. But opposition to its program developed early. Southern sympathizers, leaders in the Democratic Party, organized the "Law-and-Order Contingent" to rescue the malefactors. They made angry speeches, violent threats, even attempted mob action—but they failed to stop the vigilantes. The solidarity of their strength, however, foreshadowed the Civil War which was soon to tear the nation. The lines were now clearly drawn in California, but the men of the South lost the first battle.

Its mission finally accomplished, the Vigilance Committee, amid festivities and ceremony, disbanded and restored to the city its function of police power.

The quarrels in Congress over slavery, the rising threat of secession from the Southern states, were now beginning to echo loudly in California. Secret societies sprang up to champion one faction or the other. But more and more Californians were coming to feel themselves isolated from the nation.

The Sierra Nevadas were a formidable barrier separating the West from the rest of the country. The native Californians, whose social and political interests were still predominantly Spanish, felt no strong ties holding them to the Union. And many of the newcomers were beginning to resent the intrusion of Eastern strife on their lives.

They were, all of them, ready for "the dream." At first there were just whispers of it. Casual conversations played with it. Here and there a newspaper editorial toyed with it. But when the "Law-and-Order" party stood helpless before the activities of the vigilantes, and Governor J. Neely Johnson vacillated on the question of intervention (thus keeping both state and federal troops idle), the cry was raised: "We want a Pacific Republic!"

Back in '48, when Commodore Sloat had raised the Stars and Stripes over the custom house in Monterey, the Bear Flag Republic, organized at Sonoma had collapsed. Yet the veterans of the Mexican War had never forgotten that their California had proudly entered the Union not as a conquered province or territory, but as an independent republic. Perhaps they were playing with the memory of a brief, romantic incident. But that memory now rose to challenge the terrible present.

Once before California had declared her independence. Why not again? Why put up with quarrels thousands of

miles away? God had made the Sierras a boundary against aggression. Why not proclaim them for what they were? Had not California proved that she could stand alone? Was she not rich? Were not the ships of the world in San Francisco's harbor? Then raise the Bear Flag again!

But wait! What about the Oregon territory? Why not include Oregon? Why not take in the whole Pacific Coast area of the United States? That was it. Forget the California Republic! Proclaim the Pacific Republic!

That was the dream. And the men of the South heard about it. They thought about it. They accepted it, and made it their own. If they could not turn California into a slave state, if they could not bring her into allegiance with the South — and they would still try — then at least they would prevent her wealth and manpower from helping the North. Proclaim the Pacific Republic!

The years of the decade moved onward. It was now 1859. The wounds of the slavery question were raw. California was still in the Union, but the link was wearing thin. Senator David C. Broderick still held the reins of the Democratic Party; how much longer he could hold them was problematical. Senator William M. Gwin was challenging him every inch of the road now — and Senator Gwin had the rapidly growing pro-slavery faction behind him.

The decision was near. David S. Terry was a candidate to succeed himself on the supreme court bench. The vigilantes had almost hanged him for murder in '55 — but his victim surprisingly recovered, and they let him go. He was a candidate of doubtful worth at best, yet he was so outspokenly pro-slavery that the faction backed him. But he was defeated.

Angrily he denounced Broderick as the cause of his downfall. Broderick, never much a master of his temper, returned the accusation with stinging insults. For a few days there was a battle of insults. Terry sent a challenge for a duel.

Early on the morning of September 13, the two men met on the southern shore of Lake Merced. Heavy fog gave the air a bitter chill. The preliminary courtesies were quickly over. Dressed in stiff, black coats the two enemies faced each other. Terry was cool. Broderick betrayed his excitement.

"Gentlemen, are you ready?"

"Ready!" snapped Terry.

Broderick hesitated a moment. "Ready."

"One!"

Broderick's pistol fired prematurely and the ball struck the ground. Terry answered fire. Broderick shuddered, raised his arms, then sank to the ground.

Three days later Broderick was dead. The men of the South had scored a victory.

The men of the North were stunned. Broderick had been a Democrat, but he had been the one colorful, forthright, popular leader in the state who stood for the Union. Lincoln's friend Edward Baker, who might have succeeded Broderick in the people's eyes, had already gone north to be in at the birth of a new state, Oregon—"to save Oregon for the Union."

The men of the North were men of skill, of conviction, but none of them stood out as a leader who could hold the state.

At that moment the congregation of the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco had a problem of their

own. For the sixth time in their first nine years, the pulpit was vacant. They needed a man, loyal to the Union, who could take their growing church and with his oratory build it to the heights of which the teeming city held promise.

They had heard of one. But would he come? At least they could invite him.

The preacher *did* come to the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco. And the leader came for the men of the North. But no one knew what his coming would mean, least of all, the man himself — Thomas Starr King.

2

Decision in Boston

*The tired young minister of the Hollis Street
Church makes up his mind*

JULIA WAS WORRIED. The last of the guests had gone home, Edith was in bed, and Starr was in his study going over his manuscripts for the week's lectures. She sat close to the fire, thinking. The evening had been as brilliant as usual. Starr always inspired the best in people; tonight his humor had flashed repeatedly, keeping everyone in constant laughter.

Julia smiled to herself as she recalled the time-worn story about Dr. Chapin which Starr had insisted on telling again.

"It's raining like Caesar!" had been Starr's greeting to Dr. Chapin one miserable morning.

"An absurd comparison," retorted Dr. Chapin.

"Not at all," replied Starr. "Have you so soon forgotten your classics — 'Caesar reigned hard.'"

But his voice had sounded so tired! She had seen him, when he thought no one was looking, sinking into his chair with the exhaustion of an old man.

Theodore Parker had said that Starr was the best

preacher in Boston — Mr. Parker, who had a well-to-do congregation in the crowded Music Hall. *He* wasn't the minister of the Hollis Street Church where the salary was so small that Starr had to go all over creation giving lectures in order to keep his family alive!

How she hated the train which would take him away in the morning! Why wouldn't Starr give up this life, take some other church where he would be free from financial care? Good Dr. Bellows in New York had been writing him about other places. Chicago wanted Starr: they offered a new church and \$5000 salary. What that would mean! Julia did not trust herself to think too much about it.

Buffalo wanted Starr. So did Cincinnati. Dr. Bellows thought that would be a good charge, close to Antioch College. She remembered Starr's enthusiasm after Emerson had glowingly described Horace Mann's work at the college. Last August, Horace Mann had died, and some great New England influence was needed there. There was a chance for Starr.

Julia's thoughts made her impatient. They even wanted Starr in San Francisco, California!

She would force the issue. With determination she went into the study. Starr's head was on his desk. He seemed asleep. How frail and tiny he looked! He should really go to bed.

The head bobbed up. There was a merry twinkle in the tired eyes.

"Julia, how would you like to go to San Francisco?" She didn't know whether to believe there was any seriousness in the inquiry.

“ ‘Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge.’ ”

Starr's laughter was enough to awaken the city and start the neighbors talking.

“Julia,” he cried, “that was spoken by a widow to her mother-in-law.”

“Well, I feel like a widow,” she pouted, “with your lectures always taking you away from me.” Instantly she regretted her words, for the merry eyes grew dull again.

“I know, Julia, it is time to move, although I dread breaking the ties which hold us here. But if, for once, I could look forward to a quiet winter I should deeply rejoice. Even now I must carry the gates of Gaza again, lecturing, lecturing for money, money — that is the song that buzzes in my ears. When shall I have rest? If I don't stop soon, I shall be like my father — dead before I'm forty. Perhaps that is my fate.”

“You must not talk like that, Starr!”

“No, Julia, I must not, but the thought lives with me.” He threw off the dark mood. With sudden enthusiasm, he said: “Listen, Julia, I've been writing Dr. Bellows. Listen to what I told him: ‘I have just finished the reading of the cubic yard or so of documents from San Francisco, which you have sent to me. They are very clear and strong, and I must acknowledge that they impress me seriously. I do desire to be in a position where my labor would be of greater worth to the general cause than it can be in Boston, and where, too, I could be relieved from the detestable vagrancy imposed by my present necessity for lecturing. If my own feeling simply were to decide the case, I should not hesitate an hour in saying

yes, to California. From the first, that has seemed to me more like the Providential call than any position nearer home.' "

It was not a definite commitment, but Julia was satisfied. Before long Starr would decide — Cincinnati or San Francisco. The best fruits of eleven years of preaching and lecturing could be displayed again. And Starr could rest and be strong once more. She could sleep now.

The year 1859 was rapidly passing. The day after Christmas, Starr King wrote Henry Whitney Bellows again: "When under pressure, I feel the claims of Cincinnati; when alone, so that the attractions of the two posts play unobstructed, I find San Francisco the stronger body. Drs. Putnam, Peabody, Heywood, Hill, Livermore, the brethren in Cincinnati, and lastly and strongest, you, have endorsed the call from the Queen City with very urgent and wise appeals. If I still feel in the core of the heart an impulse to the more distant region, must I not take it as the Providential intimation? . . . I think I shall send in my resignation next week to the society here. It will tear my inward cords as nothing in life yet. But I do think we are unfaithful in huddling so closely around the cozy stove of civilization in this blessed city, and I am ready to go out into the cold and see if I am good for anything. I grieve intensely over the probable disappointment of the Cincinnati brethren. Pecuniarily I think their call is better than San Francisco; and they offer to let me go to Europe, too, which I must now postpone indefinitely. But I do not feel strong enough for the work they need, and I cannot but feel that San Francisco is the more crying call."

The decision was near. For a few days longer there was

inward struggle. Then, on January 2, 1860, he wrote his friend: "To-morrow I send word to San Francisco that they can have what is left of me for two years. I shall leave the 5th April or 5th March, — probably on the 5th April. This morning, with a sad pen, I sent final word to Mr. Hosea, in Cincinnati. Were I twice as strong, that would be my true post. So you see I give you the facts as soon as they are crystallized. I devoutly hope that I have not made a mistake, and that by consecrated labor in California, I may be of service to the good cause and the brethren." And he signed the letter, "Your friend of the San Francisco order now, T.S.K."

Julia had no time to wonder whether she regretted leaving Boston. There was too much packing to do. And hundreds of farewells to say. One thought carried her through those harassing days: Starr was going to rest.

Through all the excitement the congregation in Hollis Street could not accept the reality of their minister's resignation. With desperate hope, they granted him a vacation of fifteen months begging him, when it was over, to come home. They sent him away with a gift of \$2000.

A few months later the *Daily Alta California* of San Francisco was to tell its readers of this gift and suggest that other churches might indulge in such "Courtesies to Ministers."

There were dinners and parties. On Sunday, March 25, Starr preached his farewell sermon.

Theodore Parker was not there to say good-bye to his "bright and elfish" friend. Parker was already on that last, fruitless voyage for health which would end in Florence, Italy.

New York was the first stop on the journey. Starr had

a little while for a last conversation with Henry Whitney Bellows. On April 4, three hundred people crowded into the Fifth Avenue Hotel for a dinner in his honor. The aged poet, William Cullen Bryant, presided. Old friends spoke high words of tribute. They spoke of Starr King's book, *The White Hills: Their Legends, Landscape, and Poetry*. They recalled his furious lecture tours. They touched on the power of his ministry. And they looked forward to his bright promise on the far-away Pacific Coast. They could not know how that promise was to be fulfilled.

The next day Starr and Julia and Edith sailed on the *Northern Light*. They were to travel by way of the Isthmus of Panama. Starr was willing to risk the danger of malaria for the joy of crossing that narrow strip of land which held together two continents.

3

The New Ministry Begins

*Starr King quickly learns of the many activities
in store for him*

JULIA "WAS NOT MADE FOR A SAILOR." During most of the long journey, she remained in her berth. When the family reached San Francisco, she was carried to the Oriental Hotel, "a forlorn looking wooden building in a wretched part of the city, but the best kept house in the place." A few days on land, with lots of rest and plenty of fresh fruit to eat, soon restored her to health.

It was late in the afternoon of Saturday, April 28, 1860, when the ship docked. The church building had been closed for some time. No arrangements had been made for services on the next day; the "committee of the parish" had thought Starr would be too tired to preach. But he was anxious to begin, and persuaded them to insert a brief notice in a Sunday morning paper.

"The first feeling with many, on seeing Mr. King, was disappointment," wrote a self-exiled New Englander to a friend back home after that first service. "He was so diminutive, looked so young, and was so very different in outward appearance from what was expected. The

crowd went to hear him out of curiosity, expecting never to go again; thinking perhaps to leave before the service was over. They entered the church timidly; with compassion it may be for the youth who was to undergo such a sharp test of his powers. They filled pews, aisles, porticoes, and the street; but when Mr. King began, there was no restlessness; his voice charmed them, and before he finished they knew they had a great man before them."

The next morning Julia knew that Starr had not made a mistake: San Francisco was his proper place. In the *Daily Alta California* she read his praises. In a prominent place on the first page, the editor spoke his mind:

"The services of the re-opening of the First Unitarian Church were held yesterday — the day following the arrival of the Rev. Thomas Starr King, who had been called by the congregation from New York. [Evidently the editor had not yet learned of the eleven strenuous years at the Hollis Street Church in Boston!] He entered at once on the duties of his mission and delivered in the forenoon, a sermon, eminent alike for its masterly eloquence, depth of thought, richness of illustration, and nervous purity of diction and style. A broad and liberal Christian charity flowed through the discourse, which was set off by a manly and sonorous voice, penetrating to the remotest corner of the building. We may be permitted to congratulate the congregation upon the acquisition of an earnest, able, and unaffected pastor, whose labor in the cause of Christianity cannot but be attended with the happiest results."

Starr was pleased at Julia's happiness. Before breakfast he had driven about the countryside to get a hasty glimpse of his new surroundings. "The flowers in the fields are

wonderful in their mass, color, and variety," he told her. "That is all that has impressed me favorably as yet. The city is very queer, and very uninteresting to Eastern eyes. It is a vast struggle of houses over half a dozen sand hills, and the streets are bilious with Chinamen."

Jessie Benton Frémont was not impressed with the appearance of the new minister. He looked a frail, beardless, hilarious youth who enjoyed a reputation far beyond his abilities. Curiosity, as much as anything, prompted her to go to the Unitarian Church one Sunday morning. In his heavy preaching gown the minister seemed weaker than ever — a contrast to the tall, sturdy, and justly famous husband who sat beside her.

Starr King's dark eyes seemed to penetrate her. Jessie stirred uncomfortably. Then, as he began speaking, she forgot her mistrust of him. His voice dispelled all doubt, and his expression of a deep and broad Christian humanitarianism reached out to her own faith.

After church, as she shook his hand, she invited Starr and Julia for dinner on Monday evening.

Jessie Benton Frémont never forgot that evening. To her intimate circle of great friends she added another who was to occupy a place that not even death could destroy. Colonel Frémont was glad; real friends were all too few for a family caught up in the tidal waves of earth-shaking politics.

Starr confessed to the doubt which had often disturbed him. His sense of humor — was it sacrilegious for a minister? Jessie welcomed it. And she confessed her early doubts of him because of his size. He laughed: "Though I weigh only 120 pounds, when I am mad I weigh a ton!"

Jessie wanted Starr to weigh a ton. She wanted him to

get mad at the secessionists bent on destroying the Union and strengthening slavery. The chance was at hand. Colonel Edward Baker, elected Senator from Oregon on the platform of the newly organized Republican Party, was due in San Francisco. There would be another dinner party.

Starr's resolutions to get some rest were rapidly disappearing. He could not overcome his initial dislike of the city, but neither could he suppress his excitement at the opportunities it presented. His reputation for eloquence gained momentum.

Invitations came quickly. San Francisco was not so tightly isolated that it could escape that curious fever which raged throughout the rest of the United States: San Franciscans too wanted to be lectured to.

The Mercantile Library Association made the first successful bid for Starr's services, and proudly announced the fact one week after his arrival. On May 10th, the day of the first lecture, the editor of the *Daily Alta California* turned loose his eloquent pen: "Among the multitude of rising intellects — writers, preachers, lecturers and reformers — at the East, few have acquired so great a reputation, at so early an age as Starr King. Those who wish to hear a live thinker discuss living and vital topics, in a fresh, original, and sometimes startling manner, will do well to attend this course."

This editor, Fred K. MacCrellish, never ceased his enthusiastic support. Other newspaper men were cordial. Yet there were some who took a dim view of the powers of the Unitarian minister. The pro-Southern *Alameda Gazette* was alert to his oratory, but considered it the dan-

gerous ranting of an ambitious youngster. Starr King was only thirty-five when his ministry to the West began.

His first lecture, on the subject "Substance and Show," was given in the First Congregational Church. The next morning Editor MacCrellish stated: ". . . we may assert . . . that no part of the lecture could be repeated without marring the whole. For an hour and a half the speaker held his large audience (in galleries, choir, and body of the church) spellbound with his eloquence, now exciting ready laughter with his impromptu sallies of wit, or hushing to silence by his splendid imagery and illustrations."

Starr had learned his lesson in California politics at the Frémont's dinner for Senator Baker. Throughout these first lectures he paid tribute to the glory of American progress from Faneuil Hall to the Golden Gate. No one could doubt which side he was on; the men of the North took heart again.

The next week he spoke in Sacramento, and returned to San Francisco to deliver a sermon on behalf of the "Ladies' Seamen's Friend Society, an infant organization in need of support." Jessie Frémont observed that her friend's humanitarianism was more than a matter of oratory: the special collection amounted to \$450.

On Sunday, June 17th, the *Alta California*, catching up with the literary world, printed a favorable review of *The White Hills* — published almost a year before. Four days later it announced that word had come of the death of Theodore Parker in Florence.

Julia and Starr moved into a home of their own, overlooking "the range of hills that heave up from the Pacific, and east of them forty miles of the dreaming bay." For the

lone apostle of liberal Christianity with a personal popularity that seemed to have no bounds, this home was no quiet refuge; someone was forever at the gate wanting to see him. At first the intrusions did not wear heavily on him. His stock of sermons and lectures from Boston was still high.

He was preaching twice on Sundays, to a "double-barrelled congregation." "Our church continues full," he wrote. "In the evening our own people generally stay home, and yet the seats are all filled with strangers." Monday evenings usually saw him teaching.

As the days passed Starr began to feel that his polished, carefully written Eastern discourses lacked something of the spirit of the West. His audiences responded enthusiastically, but he sensed that they were cheering his oratory rather than hearing what he said. Julia suggested that the Frémonts might be consulted. The Colonel couldn't find anything the matter. Starr was taking himself too seriously! Jessie sensed what was wrong. She remembered an excited young officer just back from his first exploring trip trying, amid public acclaim, to tumble his thoughts on paper.

She walked with Starr to a far corner of her garden. How quiet and peaceful it seemed at Black Point! The sun was setting beyond that magnificent channel which the Colonel had so aptly named the Golden Gate. When they returned to the house, a bargain had been reached.

In that corner of the garden, hidden from inquisitive eyes, safe from the interruptions of eager visitors, Starr could write and rewrite all his discourses. There he could feel the freshness, the majesty, and the vigor of the New West, and that feeling would be translated into his words.

At tea time, when his work was done, he could speak it out, and Jessie would listen. In a measure, what she had once done for the Pathfinder she could now do for the Preacher. It was not that she was called upon for the older service of altering sentences into language which critics would accept. Instead she would listen and her experienced ear would rebel at the academic twists and the unpolished phrases. What was she to gain from the bargain? What pleased her more than the joy of meeting an intellect which she admired? The bargain was kept until the war called the Colonel and Jessie back East; but Starr still sought refuge in the garden up to the moment when, in fear of a French invasion, the army commandeered Black Point for fortifications. (That was in 1863, when Starr's brief journey was nearly over.)

In July Starr, declared a holiday. With six companions he headed for the High Sierras. Their first important stop was among the giant redwoods in Mariposa County. Few eyes had seen such trees! Some were as old "at least as Christianity." Starr ran a measuring line around one of them. "His girth is ninety feet!" And from the roots went up young green shoots "a hundred feet high." In the grove the voices of the men sounded strange, "hallowing in the distance, in this natural temple in which man is a mite."

The next day the party moved on to Yosemite. To his friend William Alger, Starr expressed his feelings: "In the Yosemite pass, under rocks *five thousand* feet sheer! El Gebor!! Great is matter and the force of cohesion! I close this note in sight of a river which pitches 1500 feet at one leap, and then takes two more, one 400 and the other 500, and the roar! —"

Starr was not the first American to follow the steep, rocky, and exhausting trail into this greatest wonder in a state of many wonders, but his letters to the *Boston Transcript* were the first dramatic accounts to stir the imaginations of the East.

There was work at hand. The vacation had to be short. On May 18, at the Wigwam in Chicago, the Republican Party had nominated Abraham Lincoln for the Presidency of the United States. Southern states, identifying him with radical abolitionism, threatened to secede if he achieved the election. In California the Democrats went into action.

Starr King returned to San Francisco to take up the mission which was to lift him from sheer pulpit prominence into the man who was "to save California for the Union."

There were furious days ahead, with no chance for the rest and quiet for which he had so long planned. Issues as dear as life itself were in the balance. He was to fill a place, exhibit strength, display power which those friends who a few months before had bidden him "Godspeed" little dreamed were to come about.

In New England Starr King had proved himself an orator, but New England did not know the magnitude of the patriot who had sailed for California.

4

The Election of 1860

The pulpit and politics become one

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS NOMINATED at the Republican Convention in May, 1860. The Democrats had met in stormy sessions at Charleston in April; from the start their convention had been divided. Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi announced that Southern support would go to the man willing to see Congress enact a territorial slave code. The leading candidate for the nomination, Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, refused to abandon the traditional right of the territories to make this decision for themselves.

The Douglas faction was powerful enough to write the party platform, but it could not muster the necessary votes for the nomination. After ten days of futile activity, the convention adjourned until June 18 in Baltimore.

By this time the factions of the party were rigidly split. The Northern wing promptly nominated Douglas. The Southern wing, after debating awhile, selected John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky and approved a platform calling for a territorial slave code.

Earlier in the year Governor John B. Weller of California had stated to the legislature: "California will not go with the North or with the South, but here upon the shores of the Pacific found a mighty republic, which may in the end prove the greatest of all."

The bitter four-way contest was on in California. Of the state's fifty-three newspapers, only seven openly advocated the election of Lincoln.

The California Democratic Convention, meeting in Sacramento, backed the Breckenridge candidacy.

As voting time drew near, Governor Weller abandoned his previous dream of a Pacific Republic. Speaking in San Jose, in October, he declared that if Lincoln should be elected, the Southern states would surely secede and he would consider Californians "less than men if they did not."

Lights burned into the morning at Starr King's house in the weeks following his return from Yosemite. Early in August he made his position clear. Speaking before a large gathering of negroes, he let California know that he stood with the Union, with the Republican Party, and with Abraham Lincoln.

For his lectures, for his sermon subjects, he seized upon themes which could be molded to the thought of national unity.

He revived his discourse on "Patriotism," originally delivered almost ten years before in Boston. To his congregation he cried out: "Patriotism is unselfish devotion to the idea of a nation, its heaven-inspired soul, its representative office and mission. And anything lower than this form of it here, any interpretation of it equivalent to a defense of every act of every administration, even when

that act does violence to the spirit of our history and the providential pointings of our call, is a disgrace to ourselves, an abuse to a noble word, and an offense before God. If a country such as ours is to raise no loftier, no more heroic type of national virtue than that, our fertile zones will indeed be barren of attractive fruit. Then we may say, here is America, but where are the Americans?"

He was strong in these outspoken sentiments, but stronger yet were needed. Events were soon to produce them.

Sun Mountain in Nevada, site of the silver "Bonanza," urgently called him. Union sentiment was powerful, but not powerful enough to stop the secessionists. Every newspaper supported Breckenridge or Douglas. The volunteer fire companies, phenomena both of necessity and men's yearning for comradeship, supported Lincoln. When the Washoe Zephyrs lustily fanned every spark into a conflagration, the fire-lads had their hands full; when on the streets of the mining towns political differences called for bullets and knives, the fire-lads were just as busy.

Tom Peasly, foreman of Virginia (City) Engine Company No. 1, organized his red-shirted pals into a "Committee of Safety," pledged, under oath, to defend Sun Mountain to the death from any Breckenridge rebellion.

The fire-lads sent the call to Starr. Other invitations had come from the mining towns of the Mother Lode. Fired with zeal for his cause, plagued with curiosity to see the mines for himself, Starr set out on a quick, hectic tour. Going north from San Francisco he headed for Sacramento, then on to "Hangtown" (now sedately called Placerville) following the famous stage route to Carson City and up into Sun Mountain.

It was a dangerous journey for any man pledged to Lincoln. The mines still drew rough adventurers to whom life was the cheapest of all commodities. The fire-lads had to keep a watchful eye on their precious missionary of nationalism.

His oratory did not disappoint them, though he was, at first, startled to confront audiences where guns and knives flashed in the belts of everyone present! More than ever before he was on trial, not for himself, but for the cause on which he spoke. With sudden determination, he abandoned his manuscripts and spoke directly on the things which were in his heart. His topics did not touch always upon the issues of the hour, but he turned inevitably towards them. When he spoke in Virginia City, the miners threw their silver dollars on the stage — tokens of their approval. He moved on to Gold Cañon, to Silver City, to Devil's Gate, to Six Mile, and to Seven Mile. He returned to San Francisco exhausted in body, but his mind active with new knowledge of the far-reaching energies of the secessionists.

November 6, Election Day, came. News traveled slowly from the East; it would be a week before the national decision was known. But California knew where she stood the next day: by a narrow margin Abraham Lincoln had won.

Starr's rejoicing was tinged with fear. Lincoln had won. Perhaps he had played a small part in the victory. Yet had not the Democratic Party been split, had there not been some Douglas Democrats to pull strength away from the Breckenridge faction, the cause of the Union would have been lost.

In truth, what did that victory mean to the Republicans

of the state? Nothing. There were four Republicans in the State Senate. There were nineteen in the House as against fifty-four Democrats. The Governor was a Democrat. All the delegates to Washington were Democrats. And even the courts were controlled by Democrats — most of them Southern Democrats.

Lincoln was elected. He had California's votes. But California was plunging straight out of the Union!

Starr King prepared for the year of decision.

5

1861—California's Year of Decision

Starr King saves California for the Union

ON DECEMBER 20, 1860, a convention held in Charleston, South Carolina, by a vote of 169 to 0 dissolved the ties that bound that state to the United States of America. Secession was an accomplished fact. Six more states were to follow suit within a few weeks.

The *Tulare Post* was in the vanguard of California papers to report the news joyfully to its readers. With that daring, eloquent bluntness characteristic of the early newspapers of the West, it went on to denounce everything connected with the Union. Federal troops stationed near-by bore the brunt of the attack; to the excited editor they were "bloodhounds of Zion!" So wild was the hatred stirred up that when some soldiers came into town a mob attacked them and killed two.

General Albert Sidney Johnston, in command of the federal troops at the Presidio in San Francisco, hesitated to risk any action; he tended to sympathize with the Confederacy.

The *Alameda Gazette* acknowledged that the Union

was irrevocably dissolved. It called for the establishment of the long-discussed Pacific Republic, "since it would be folly to expect men born in the South to take up arms against their nativity."

On January 16, 1861, the Bear Flag was hoisted over a surveying schooner at Stockton amid loud public rejoicing.

Early in February delegates from the seceded states met in Montgomery, Alabama, to proclaim the Confederate States of America and elect Jefferson Davis as president.

San Francisco was tense. The battle of the newspapers, the alarming information coming from the East, kept nerves on edge. The city was plagued with rumor. The Knights of the Golden Circle — a secret organization dedicated to the Southern cause — were reported preparing to seize control. Their immediate objectives were "the Presidio, the forts on Alcatraz Island, the Custom house, the Mint, and all other United States property." Ex-sheriff Doane, a Southerner who believed in the Union, revealed the plot.

Was it a genuine danger? Historians still argue whether it was. To the people of the city it was real. Southern strength was visible on every hand. The worst *could* happen. The Union men took precautions.

In the United States Senate, Edward Baker asked for the recall of General Johnston. The general resigned his commission and offered his services to Jefferson Davis.

The skirmishes were over. The men of the North were ready to push their fight to save California for the Union. Colonel De Witt Thompson of the state militia, a member of Starr's congregation, pushed forward a plan for mass meetings throughout the state. Enthusiasm ran high

— but only one man had the skill to make the meetings succeed.

Starr did not hesitate to accept the invitation when it came. He counted the cost. Julia counted it, too. What was one life, however rich, in the cause of the Union?

Washington's Birthday was the time appointed for the opening shot.

In the refuge at Black Point, Starr hid himself away. This was no ordinary lecture he was preparing, a pleasant thing for some literary society. Never had he felt so humble, so inadequate, so much in agony! The Union, his country, was torn apart. War clouds were darkening. Men were willing to destroy the noblest republic ever known on earth in order to perpetuate the vicious evil of slavery, in order that they might live and prosper on the degrading labor of other men! Never had he felt so much alone.

What he should speak about was obvious: "Washington, Father of His Country." In his solitary refuge Starr wrote his message.

Shortly before the critical day, at a prayer meeting, a man arose to cry out that the Almighty had appointed him to rid the city of that enemy of Christ, Thomas Starr King; as soon as a good opportunity presented, he would carry out the divine command. Arrested and questioned the next day, the man was judged a lunatic, and sent to an insane asylum at Stockton.

The incident placed Starr's friends on guard. Not even a preacher was safe from the treachery of the secessionists!

Even nature seemed to rejoice when Washington's Birthday came. The skies were clear; the sun shone warm,

chasing the chill air which had settled over the city in the past week. The hills were luxuriant in their covering of fresh green. In the gardens the spring flowers bloomed, and the branches of the early fruit trees were hidden by blossoms. Excitement stirred all over the city. Mass meetings cropped up everywhere. Washington was a hero acclaimed by North and South, and orators bent his memory to their causes throughout the day.

Starr was to lecture in Platt's Hall at half past seven. Long before he arrived, every place was filled. And every place was paid for at a dollar! Not even the newspapermen received free admission.

It was a mixed gathering, champions of the North mingling with aristocrats from the South. On the stage were all the prominent people who could fill it. Frederick Billings was among them; a leading attorney, he later helped to found the school that became the University of California. Jessie Benton Frémont was not on the stage; she chose a place in front of the speaker.

On a small stand, covered with the American flag, Starr placed his manuscript.

For two hours and a quarter he spoke. Beginning in eulogistic sentences of the nation's hero, he quickly turned to the issue of the hour. He cast his arrows at the people who opposed "free soil." He brought applause, even from the Southerners, with his spirited denunciation of secession. He bluntly attacked the growing campaign for a Pacific Republic, and pledged California to a Northern republic with a "flag that should have no treacherous threads of cotton in its warp!" Then, as he drew to a close, the little preacher chanted softly:

We are coming, Father Abraham,
Three hundred thousand strong. . . .

His voice rose higher and higher as he chanted on. And he stopped to an outburst of thunderous applause.

Jessie had not been so stirred in years. Her friend had won California's first great battle for the North!

Starr dropped from fatigue. For several days he was too hoarse to speak. Like an avalanche came the calls to him to repeat what he had said. Timid men, heretofore afraid to proclaim their sympathies, grew strong and stood up to be counted.

In Washington on Monday, March 4, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as the sixteenth President of the United States. From a platform in front of the unfinished Capitol, he said: "I hold that, in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. . . . In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without yourself being the aggressors. *You* have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while *I* shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve and protect it.' " The challenge was unmistakable.

In San Francisco that night Starr repeated his address, now calling it "Washington and the Union"; again he faced a crowded hall, with hundreds turned away. Within another week he had delivered his address in Marysville and in Stockton, "the stronghold of the South." And he returned to give it for the third time in San Francisco. Within a day he followed it with another on "Webster

and the Constitution," careful not to dwell on the "Seventh of March" speech and the Compromise of 1850!

On April 12, Jefferson Davis answered Lincoln's challenge. Confederate guns fired on Fort Sumter. When the news reached the West, the Stars and Bars flew in Los Angeles. But in San Francisco the militia was drawn into a mass meeting, and Starr King spoke on "The Battle of Lexington." The definition of treason was made clear!

Late in the evening of June 3, in Chicago, Stephen A. Douglas died. Men of Union sympathies now swung wholly to the Republican Party. In California, Leland Stanford was nominated for governor.

Starr King jumped into the bitter contest. He made quick trips into the Mother Lode mining towns. In most instances there was not enough time to prepare the carefully phrased, written manuscripts of prewar days. Starr spoke directly, earnestly, occasionally giving way to bitter invective against the rebels. Once when someone interrupted him, hissing, he shot back: "There are only two kinds of animals that express themselves by a hiss — the goose and the snake." Pointing to the offender, he shouted "Behold the Copperhead!"

The issues were brilliantly clear for him now. Right and wrong were unquestioningly defined: "Rebellion sins against the Mississippi, it sins against the coast line, it sins against the ballot box, it sins against oaths of allegiance, it sins against public and beneficent progress and history and hope — the worth of the laborer, the rights of man. It strikes for barbarism against civilization."

The one supreme task was to get Leland Stanford elected. There were hints that the fiery little preacher was backing the powerful capitalist because Stanford was

a member of his congregation. But Starr made it plain that he would champion any man strong for the Union, whatever his faith!

Politics alone did not absorb his energies. His church was growing rapidly. Before many more months plans would have to be made for a new and larger structure. Starr still visited the sick with meticulous care. He still listened to and encouraged young men of promise.

Before the war Starr had introduced a struggling young writer to Jessie Benton Frémont. Together they still found time to listen to his writings and to criticize them. Bret Harte was never to forget those days at Black Point when Starr and Jessie, thrusting aside the intense problems bearing down on them, would quietly analyze his stories.

In July, Jessie broke up housekeeping at Black Point. The Pathfinder, now a general, was already in the East playing his stormy part in the war against the Confederacy; Jessie wished to be near him. Starr and Julia said good-bye to their good friend with heavy hearts. Again struggling against his ailing body, Starr wondered whether he would ever see her again.

Yet there was no time for personal sadness. Julia was busy with relief work, Starr with his church, his campaign, and his lectures.

When Starr went as far north as the mining town of Yreka, the journey taxed his strength severely. He stopped frequently to speak — in Dead Wood, Rough and Ready, Scott's Bar, Horsetown, Mugginsville, and Oro Fino. In a humorous streak touched off by these picturesque names, he wrote home: "Mad Mule has not yet sent in a request;

nor Piety Hill, nor Modesty Gulch; but doubtless they will be heard from in due time."

Tired as he was, he could not resist a delay at Mount Shasta; a beautiful mountain always challenged Starr to climb it. And he relished every moment on this "sublime peak." The excursion cost him a good seat on the stage coach. For the twenty-seven continuous hours' journey from Shasta to Yreka he had to travel on an outside seat "without a shawl."

In San Francisco Julia was homesick. Earlier in the year she had injured her kneecap painfully by falling through one of the rotted board sidewalks which served the city, and it still bothered her. With Starr away on his speaking trips, her loneliness coupled with her pain made her long for her family and friends in New England. If only she could be with them for a little while!

Jessie Benton Frémont ventured to chide Starr about Julia's condition. "Take a rest, both of you! Let the congregation miss you for awhile!" But Jessie knew she was wasting her words: Starr was too badly needed in California.

The fortunes of war were going against the Union. The Battle of Bull Run had ended in disaster. The secessionists in California, taking heart, were clamoring for an "honorable" peace. Starr had no time to rest from his travels.

In August he presented the question of "Peace, and What It Would Cost Us" before another crowd in Platt's Hall. He had to stem the tide which seemed to divide the Republican Party and endanger the September elections.

"Four months after this summons [Lincoln's call for troops to suppress the rebellion], we hear the cry for *peace* in the land," he began.

"Where does this cry come from? Is it from men who have been in sympathy with the government, and have turned, seeing the wrong or the hopelessness of the struggle? Is it from Christians thoroughly imbued with the spirit of nonresistance, disposed to turn the left cheek when the right is smitten, shocked at the sight of a muzzle or a dagger, and so rapt by heavenly things that they can hear nothing but the music of the heavenly chorus — 'Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will to men'? Is it from a class of economists and thrifty workers who cannot bear to know that any of the forces of a community are turned off from the honest and constant toil that will enrich the nation?

"The cry comes from the *enemies* of the government. The leading voices that uplift it have never condemned the *outbreak* of the war, the *first drill* of the battalions, the first roar of cannon. The men who shout thus have been, from the first, in sympathy with the *war makers*. They gloat over national disaster. They shriek for the assassination of the president. They are branded for Jeff. Davis, on the shameless foreheads of their souls, deeper than California's cattle are seared with their owner's mark." Peace, he went on to say, is impossible unless it be the surrender of the rebels. Any other peace "would cost us the Constitution and all that is American!"

Starr had good cause for this outburst. The day before his speech, the leading men of San Francisco had forwarded a petition to Secretary of War Simon Cameron, asking that California troops not be withdrawn for action

in the East. So strong was their evidence that their request was promptly granted!

So long as the Democrats held power in the state offices, so long as the Knights of the Golden Circle continued their activities, so long as the majority of the newspapers supported disloyal programs — secession, the Pacific Republic, and, now, immediate peace — so long would the state need its troops and the support of every loyal Union man. Thus far such small detachments of California troops as had gone East had been attached to the New York and Massachusetts Volunteers.

Partly to raise funds for the Volunteers, Starr King's lecture had been scheduled for Platt's Hall. Even though he was speaking on the gravest issue of the hour, Starr could not hold back his humor on this purpose. "I am not in the habit of estimating persons or audiences by the money standard. But I cannot help rejoicing that each auditor here stands or sits as a representative character — representing one round, silver dollar, which, unclipped or unpunctuated for any expenses . . . may yet become, by that blessed magic of charity, food on the tables or fire on the hearth of a suffering family, whose desolation shall cry out to God against the Southern rebellion."

The kind of opposition the Union men were facing in the election campaign was clarified for them in the battles of the newspapers. The *San Francisco Herald*, later to turn about face, was now saying that California should "stand aside and assume the position of the fox in the fable, who after the lion and the tiger became exhausted, appropriated the best portion of the stag to himself." The *Visalia Equal Rights Expositor* sallied forth to denounce President Lincoln, his cabinet, and the Congress as "the

most tyrannical and corrupt crew that ever polluted the earth with their presence." The *Visalia Delta*, loyal to the Union, noted such outbursts of its competitor and mildly cheered its readers with the placid observation: "Treason against the Government and constitution is preached from the pulpit, printed in the newspapers, and openly advocated in the streets and public places."

No wonder Starr's eloquence stirred the Union men! His "Peace, and What It Would Cost Us" gave the final push to the election campaign — and netted the Volunteers \$1500!

Leland Stanford won the election in September. For the time being, politically, California was safely in the Union. But the secessionists had not yet given up their struggle. The *Marysville Express* lashed out at the Democrats for letting the Republicans gain control and screamed at them not to let the cause of Confederacy lose the final battles in the West. The *San Jose Tribune*, the *Mariposa Free Press*, the *Tulare Post*, the *Argus* and the *Democrat* in Stockton all chimed in on the chorus. No one knew better than the Republicans how slender was the thread which bound the state to Abraham Lincoln's government. And the military disasters attendant on the Union campaigns were far from strengthening that thread.

The victorious election meant only that a single problem was solved for awhile: there would be no treason afloat in the high offices of the state.

Starr was busy preparing new addresses and sermons: "The Treason of Judas Iscariot," "The Choice Between Barabbas and Jesus," "The Pilgrims," "The Confederate States, Old and New." For a few weeks following the election, however, he had a welcome lull in lecturing.

Other problems now demanded his time. His beloved friend and advisor, Henry Whitney Bellows, was in charge of the newly organized United States Sanitary Commission, predecessor of the American Red Cross in caring for the sick and the wounded. Great sums of money were needed; Dr. Bellows turned to Starr for assistance from California. In St. Louis, Jessie Benton Frémont was already in the work.

In October the first telegraph installations linking San Francisco with the East were opened. Starr enjoyed himself sending messages to his old friends, and even dictating sermons to them!

He was at the telegraph when news was received of the death of Edward Baker. As Senator from Oregon, but more as champion of the Union from the entire West Coast, Lincoln's friend had gone to Washington just before the war. When the rebellion began, the President offered Baker a brigadier general's commission, but he had declined it until he sensed that he could no longer serve any great purpose in the Congress. Then, at Ball's Bluff, overlooking the Potomac, when a few hundred Union troops were attacked, General Edward Baker was in command. As he rallied his men, he made an easy target for the Confederate marksmen.

The joy of the election victory was "materially dashed." For quite awhile Starr sat quietly, remembering the day he had first met Edward Baker at the Frémonts' home, remembering that first summer in California when he heard Edward Baker's moving address on "Apostrophe to Liberty" and he had turned to Jessie crying: "That is the way to reach men! I can never do that! How I envy him!"

California's Union men had lost David Broderick in

'59. Now in '61 they had lost Edward Baker. A bullet must not stop Starr King!

In the following January, when the body of General Baker had been brought home to the city he loved, Starr King stood beside the open grave in Lone Mountain Cemetery and spoke the broken-hearted words of farewell. And in Washington, Abraham Lincoln, not the least of the mourners, joined his sorrow with the thoughts of the preacher.

Before 1861 was out Starr King had two more important, personal decisions to make.

Although his expanding church was bringing heavier pressure on his ministry, so widespread was his popularity as a patriotic orator that many people were forgetting that he was a minister at all. Political discourses meant but one thing to them — politics. Leland Stanford broke the news to Starr: there was a campaign on foot to persuade him to run for senator! That was not to his liking. "I would rather swim to Australia before taking a political post," he declared. Politics in the pulpit was enough for him. The campaign died.

He wanted, more than anything else, to get the contributions for the Sanitary Commission coming in from San Francisco. One day he received a draft for a thousand dollars from a group of Americans living in Victoria, British Columbia, to be used as he saw fit "in the cause of American Union." This was his thunderbolt. He sent it on to the Sanitary Commission. Then, with Platt's Hall again filled, he told the story of that gift. This time he did not praise his countrymen: he shamed them. Drawing lively pictures of the horrors of the battlefield, the pain of the wounded soldiers, the mountainous needs of the

hospitals, he urged his audience on, himself setting the example. One hundred thousand dollars were contributed.

Starr was jubilant. His audience thought they had done well. But for Starr, it was only the beginning.

Christmas, this year, in spite of the war, could be a good one.

On Christmas Day the members of the church gave Julia a diamond cross. Starr was dumbfounded.

6

The Popular Minister Extends His Activities

Starr King learns that as there is no rest for the wicked, neither is there any for a hero

EVEN WHEN HE WAS TIRED, Starr could not resist a good conversation. If a man had an interesting experience to relate, or a new scientific discovery to expound, Starr was always a willing audience and a sharp interrogator. One Saturday night, on the river boat from Sacramento, he was so absorbed with his traveling companions that he did not notice the large crowd gathered at the dock in San Francisco. The captain came over to him and said: "There's a reception on shore, Mr. King. I think it's for you."

It was more than a reception — it was a parade. Straight to the church it marched, with Starr at its head. Fired with the crowd's enthusiasm, he climbed the steps and made an impromptu speech. Then, with a flag in his hands, he dashed to the pole which towered fifty feet over the church. The crowd watched in complete silence as he ran the flag to the top. As it waved in the evening breeze, they cheered madly and burst out singing "Yankee Doodle."

The pleading letter from the Hollis Street Church which waited on Starr's desk would have to be given the usual answer: his work in California was not finished. He was still needed in San Francisco. He would write that Julia was still homesick, that Edith was studying everything in sight, that a heavy flood was laying waste the interior of the state, that the church ladies were making their sewing machines hum with the preparation of clothing for the war's victims, that he himself was writing eight lectures on the Book of Job. He could not leave, just now.

There was a more personal reason why the trip East would have to wait. In April, 1862, he wrote his friend Randolph Ryer that there was an emigrant in the King household, born on the morning of April 4th: "What shall we call the boy? Can you suggest a name? Don't say Thomas Starr, Jr. That can't be. No sir! I told the boy so plainly on the first day of his existence. We had a fair understanding. He begged, and pleaded, and urged and implored, but it was of no use. He even shook his fist at me, as if demanding that it be T. Starr the less. But I put my foot down. He sobbed and kicked but finally subsided into acquiescence." The proud father had to be sure his own oratory would win out. He went on to say: "Next Sunday the baby will be baptized in church. The name is to be Frederick Randolph. The Frederick is for Dr. [Frederick Henry] Hedge. The Randolph is for you. Really you would be proud of your namesake if you could see him."

It was even harder now to tear himself away from his family for the lecture trips, but the Sanitary Commission was a hungry charity. And as often as they could Julia

and Starr opened their home to guests. Young people of the parish came, Charles Murdock, Bret Harte, and Charles Wendte among them. Scientists and explorers like William H. Brewer of the Whitney Geological Survey, business leaders such as Horace Davis, and statesmen of the calibre of Leland Stanford and Oscar Shafter were all finding a cheerful welcome. Starr needed his visitors even though they trespassed on his precious study hours. He loved people too much to be the ivory-tower preacher. People stimulated him to his best.

On April 12, Starr delivered an address pointing up the anniversary of the fall of Fort Sumter. Some of the city folk thought it indelicate of him to deal with such a theme on Sunday in church, but the congregation applauded enthusiastically.

In May he took another of his strenuous, short vacations, and joined the Whitney expedition on its exploration of Mount Diablo, a few miles northwest of the Carquinez Straits. This mountain — always enjoyed by everyone who revels in the natural wonders of the San Francisco Bay area — opened new worlds to Starr. Ever a devotee of the mountains, under the trained eyes of the expedition's naturalists he gained an insight into the minute wonders of California's wildflowers. The first evening the party gathered about a huge campfire and talked into the morning, forgetting the pressures of the war in the intimate comradeship stirred by the burning logs. The next morning they climbed to the summit and for two and a half hours gazed at one of the most magnificent panoramas in the world.

In later months Starr was to employ the inspiration of those few hours in his devastating attacks on the secession-

ists still trying to pull the state away from the Union. But just then he was content to let what his eyes revealed sink into the depths of his being.

The end of another day saw him back at work in San Francisco. Another and more important journey was in the offing: he was preparing for the longest of his tours on behalf of the Union. Three objectives had to be planned out. He was to preach, wherever he could be heard, his Unitarian Christianity. He was to deliver his war lectures, striking out both at the secessionists and at the lukewarm patriots who put personal fortune-hunting above their country's good. And he was to gather in money — yet more money — for the Sanitary Commission.

Before he started, however, he had to find time to lecture for some of the humanitarian appeals right at home — the seamen's welfare fund, the plight of the Chinese, the rights of negroes, the cause of labor. And there was a round of committee meetings on an all-important, personal goal: the building of a new church. The cornerstone must be laid before the year was out!

Late in July Starr was ready. This time he was not to be alone. Julia was well enough to make the journey, too! Through the hot summer days they traveled northward by the overland route. Julia had not realized how thoroughly acclimated she had become to the moderate temperatures of the Bay region. She bravely carried on, careful to hide her weariness from Starr, even when the thermometer struggled beyond one hundred degrees.

Their first resting place was Marysville. Then they pushed on to Shasta. From there they moved north to Yreka, arriving on July 21st, tired from twenty-eight hours in the stage. After a day's rest, they crossed the

Oregon line and stayed in Jacksonville. Another four days of rugged traveling brought them to Salem. Starr was getting worried: expenses were so high! As closely as he could figure, he was spending \$60 a day. He might have to turn back at Portland. Julia wouldn't listen to such faint-heartedness: they were going to British Columbia!

Starr was glad to carry on. In Portland he gave a rousing oration on the war. Then, before a literary society, he gave his old lecture, "Shadow and Show." What "a rare subject" for those times! And, he proudly notes, he preached the first "Unitarian sermon in these wilds."

The nature lover could not resist a trip up the Columbia River one hundred miles to The Dalles, and a climb up Mount Hood.

From Portland they crossed into Washington Territory. When Sunday came, Starr could not resist the temptation to preach the first Unitarian sermon in the territory, at Fort Vancouver. Upward they traveled to Puget Sound and, their objective accomplished, they entered Victoria, British Columbia. Starr never totaled the number of lectures he had made on the way. But he never lost an opportunity.

From Victoria they returned by sea to San Francisco to find the city rocking from new excitement. Ever since the Stars and Bars had first waved over the Confederacy, the Rev. W. A. Scott of Calvary Presbyterian Church, Starr's only rival for pulpit prominence, had walked a cautious path. In his prayers he had remembered "the presidents." As time went on his congregation grew increasingly shocked at his references to Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis as equal leaders of the people.

The California Presbytery, early in September, summoned him for a statement. To them he explained his position: "Jeff Davis is no usurper, he is as much a President as Abraham Lincoln is. . . . There is no such thing as rebellion in this country, all is rightful revolution. . . . Jeff Davis is no more a traitor than George Washington was a traitor."

The *Daily Alta California* reported the pronouncement in full. Starr let his opinion be known. Referring to Jefferson Davis, he exclaimed: "He is a representative to my soul and conscience of a force of evil. His cause is pollution and a horror. His banner is a black flag. I could pray for him as one man, a brother man, in his private, affectional, and spiritual relations to Heaven. But as President of the seceding States, head of brigand forces, organic representative of the powers of destruction within our country, — *pray* for him! — as soon as for antichrist! Never!"

At three o'clock the next Sunday morning, September 22, a mob gathered in front of Dr. Scott's church and hung American flags on its façade, then proceeded to hang the minister in effigy, attaching to the swinging body a placard inscribed "Dr. Scott, the reverend traitor."

By eight o'clock some two thousand people were milling in front of the church. At ten, Dr. Scott arrived. The crowd parted to form a pathway for him to the main door over which the Stars and Stripes was suspended, and as he passed under it they cheered wildly.

Mounting his pulpit, Dr. Scott read a doctrinal sermon which indicated indirectly that churches do not deal with politics, but rather with good will and peace towards all men.

Returning home he found threatening letters awaiting him. His venture on the middle path had been mistaken for treason. Within two days he sailed for New York.

By this time General E. V. Sumner, now commanding the Department of the Pacific, decided that the secessionist newspapers had been exercising their venom too long. On the grounds that their disloyal utterances "discouraged enlistments," he excluded from the mails the *Stockton Argus*, the *Stockton Democrat*, the *San Jose Tribune*, the *Tulare Post*, and the *Visalia Equal Rights and Expositor*. The editor of this last paper protested so vigorously that he was arrested and imprisoned. He was soon joined by his colleague on *The Los Angeles Star*.

In the midst of the city's uproar, Starr found time to report to Henry Whitney Bellows on California's progress in fund raising for the Sanitary Commission. Dr. Bellows noted that this western outpost was leading the nation. As far as he was concerned, the Sanitary Commission in California was Thomas Starr King.

For some reason, which he was at loss to explain, Starr's fatigue had left him. The autumn saw him concentrating his attention on affairs close to him.

In another report to Dr. Bellows he forwarded a copy of a poem written on behalf of the Sanitary Commission campaign, a poem which had already gone on to the *Boston Transcript*. It was called "Our Privilege." Of its author, Starr wrote that the poem came from the pen of "Frank Bret Harte, who will yet be known more widely in our literature."

Starr was doing all he could to let America know about Bret Harte. Already the young writer was being known as "the poet-of-the day" in San Francisco. Soon, as the

short-story teller of the Forty-Niners, he would be digging his own road to fame. Meanwhile audiences still frightened him. In October, the newspapers noted, at a benefit program a poem, "The Goddess," by Frank Bret Harte was read by the Rev. T. Starr King.

The church was now commanding most of Starr's attention. On December 3, the cornerstone of the new edifice was laid. And Starr pledged himself to help raise the money needed to build the structure and, from his own purse, provide the organ. This was a new demand on his lecturing fees.

Christmas day was spent with Julia and the children. In the evening a few friends dropped in, among them William Brewer, his companion on the Mount Diablo expedition, and Baron Richthofen, a young Austrian nobleman, who had just returned to America from a scientific tour of China and Japan.

7

California's Beloved Son

A weary body cries for rest

THE NEW YEAR ENTERED FURIOUSLY: 1863 was to be the real time of testing for the Union Cause. The tide of war was to change in the East. In California the loyalists were to find out whether their gains since Leland Stanford's election were mere enthusiasm or genuine results. This was another election year.

Starr's popularity was secure. When other patriotic rallies failed, because the people of San Francisco were growing tired of parading and shouting, his rallies were always crowded. When other preachers faced half-filled auditoriums, his congregations were overflowing, morning and night. He was a hero to the men of the North. He was a champion to the downtrodden. Although his war speeches resounded with stern invectives against the rebellion, his sermons revealed his still growing humanitarian Christianity. He was the understanding friend at the sickbed and in the mourner's home. His principal philanthropy, the Sanitary Commission, was the state's philanthropy.

Starr King was famous. He knew it. He rejoiced in it because it meant that the Union was winning in Califor-

nia. It meant that the Unitarian faith was reaching into the hearts of men and women everywhere. It meant that human good could be accomplished. What did it matter that winter rains drenched him to the skin? What did it matter that the dry sand of the hills in summer choked his throat? So long as his strength endured, he would make his fame count!

Fame humbled him. Why had he become the man to lead giants in this struggle of giants? Why had there been no one else? Certainly when that final tie had been broken with the Hollis Street Church, and he had begged the people there to find a successor, his friends in New England had not grasped what had turned their popular, frail little preacher into the hero of California. Yet the telegraph wires were constantly telling them of his rise.

He had written of famous men, of Socrates, of Washington, of Webster. Did they feel the heavy burden which fame had laid at his feet? Come what may, he could not cease his activity! Would he see another new year? Would he preach in the finished church? That old presentiment was rising in him again. His fortieth year was almost at hand.

His first sermon was on "The Nation's New Year." His theme was politics, but what politics! According to proclamation by the President, "on the 1st day of January, A.D. 1863, all persons held as slaves within any state or designated part of a state the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free." The nation's new year was the nation's new era. The scourge of the ages was wiped away. Let the rebellion now raise its standards — they were standards of tyranny!

The lectures for the new church were taking shape. Starr turned back to his prewar interest in literature. Only now he was citing the writers of the day, the American poets Bryant, Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, and Lowell, "partly to sweeten our civilization, partly to help along the organ fund." And he dared to write to these poets for unpublished selections which he might read. They responded. By Wells, Fargo's express, by steamer, the poems were sent quickly.

The days passed rapidly. The winter rains kept Starr close to home most of the time. There was a fleeting trip up the river to Sacramento for a lecture on behalf of the Sanitary Commission, and another across the Bay in Oakland. Details on the new church intruded into his study hours. Letters to Dr. Bellows had to be answered.

The sermons he had brought with him from Boston were worn out. His new ones were bound up with his California life. He spoke of "Lessons from the Sierra Nevadas." He tried hard to emphasize his religious theme — that "materialism is the bane of modern life" but that intimate touch with the wonders of nature force spiritual values to speak out. But the war weighed too heavily on him. The tragedy of secessionism was too brutal. The dream of the Pacific Republic was gone from men's minds. The will to tear the nation in two was not. He had to bring out the compelling theme:

"Over every mountain-chain, from Aroostook, in Maine, to the heights that divide our bay from the Pacific, one sentiment sweeps continuous, one devotion, one hope, one speech, one prayer. There is no chain of hills or river bank, or any other natural line or limit, to bound the district of the rebellion, and suggest the propriety of a new

nationality, while it offers itself as the bulwark of it. All that might have seemed naturally perilous to the immensity of our republic has been easily conquered. Stages cross the Sierra, and wind up over the lower slope of Pike's Peak, and traverse the region between the sources of the Columbia and the Missouri. It is a line of sentiment only, cutting the tracks of rivers, that has threatened the nation, and that we must conquer by colonization. Nothing that God has made interrupts our unity. And when the spirit that has subdued the mountains, and hewn passes of easy grade out of their heights for American energy to move through, the spirit of free and honorable toil, the spirit that honors God in honoring man, when this spirit goes down in the tropic lowlands of the nation, and applies its vigor to them, and recasts the tone of society around them, the nation will again be one; the hills and the central valley stream will be in harmony, and the one flag of the republic will be supported on every height and every delta, by a common feeling, faith, and aim. By the war and its tendency to extirpate slavery, God is cutting for us this path through the frowning moral barrier that was upheaved by Satan to rupture our social geography and our peace."

The theme spoken, he could say: "But let us turn now to some of the moral lessons which reflections on the heights opens to us."

Starr had gone far since that April day in 1860 when he was just a popular young Boston preacher coming to a western outpost to implant the culture of New England. He had fallen slave to the West, and from the soil of California his ideas were shooting forth. In three years he had become, in the fullest sense, a Californian. His destiny

was bound up with that of the state he had come to love as his own. In the zeal of his patriotism the alchemy had worked.

As the days became warm and dry again, the invitations to lecture multiplied. It was a chaotic existence for Julia and Starr. And Julia remembered that night in Boston when she had given way to her hatred of the trains which took Starr from her. Hatred was not in her now, only fear, fear that Starr could not endure this tremendous drain on his energies: lecturing for the Sanitary Commission in every village and hamlet that would listen to him, lecturing for the organ, attending committee meetings, listening to the woes of the builders, raising money for the city's charities, helping young men in trouble, preaching two sermons on Sunday, finding time for a little pleasure with his family. Where would it all end? And when?

In the spring Starr laid out his plans for another long tour of the mining towns. He would have a brief rest at Tahoe, "the lake of the skies." How short that rest was to be!

In June he was writing back to San Francisco that he had gone on to Nevada and was now expected to make a Fourth of July oration. And in the letter was an urgent plea. "Ever since Eve ate the apple, clothing has been necessary to the human race; and J.C.M. [his tailor] becomes an indispensable element in civilization. I wore my best clothes in Nevada, and my extreme hope now is to induce them to hold together till I get back. But if I address the citizens, Fourth of July, I must be decently clad. So for a commission for J.C.M. If he has my measure, let him make me at once a coat, vest, and pants; black. I would like to have the coat a *leetle* larger than the

former one, which was a little too short in the waist and tightish under the arms. It fitted too well. I hate to have a man give me *fits*. When a secessionist comes in, let M. do his best in that line. If Mr. M. can make the clothes to be ready on the morning of July 4th, and will make them *first-rate*, I will wear a placard during the delivery of the Oration, 'Buy all your clothes of J.C.M., one of the best men on the Pacific Coast.' "

Starr's new suit was ready for him when he reached San Francisco. He did not wear the placard.

More money was pouring in from California for the Sanitary Commission, and Henry Whitney Bellows recounted the reaction in Wall Street where the brokers were more affected "than by any tens of millions that could have been reported at her stock board. For it gave intimation of a fact wholly unknown and unsurmised — a fact of masterly importance and determining significance, — that the most distant parts of the Republic, and that had reaped least advantages from the Flag and the Union, were unmistakably, spontaneously, irresistibly demonstrating their attachment to both. Traitors . . . shook in their shoes at the loyal dream in California's distant eye. As goes San Francisco so goes the State of California, they said; and as goes California so goes the Pacific Coast; and if the Pacific Coast goes right, surely enough of the nearer States of this Union will not fail to keep faith with their Government and their Constitution."

The Republican campaign in California was strengthened in the summer months with news of Union victories. In September the decision was secure: California was irretrievably in the Union. Starr could rest from one of his labors.

Another job was drawing to its close. The Sanitary

Commission, still carrying on its vast humanitarian tasks, had money enough. More than one quarter of its funds had come from Starr's efforts alone.

He could give all his time to the new church. Rapidly the structure was nearing its completion. Thought had to be given to its dedication.

One of his sermons that autumn was on "Living Waters from Lake Tahoe":

"This purity of nature," he said, "is part of the revelation to us of the sanctity of God. It is his character that is hinted at in the cleanness of the lake and its haste to reject all taint. It is his character that is published in the spotless heavens and the unsoiled snow and the glory of morning on mountain peaks. The purity of nature is the expression of joy, and it is a revelation to us that the Creator's holiness is not repellant and severe. God tries to win you by his Spirit, which clothes the world with beauty, to trust him, to give up your evil that you may find deeper communion with him, and to recognize the charm of goodness which alone is in harmony with the cheer and the purity of the outward world."

There was no touch of his anger at the rebellion now. It was only a matter of time before the war would end and the seceded states would return to the Union. In November, at the battlefield of Gettysburg, Abraham Lincoln spoke, foreshadowing the humanitarian spirit of the Second Inaugural. Already Starr was trying to stir that feeling among his people.

Construction difficulties were delaying the day of dedication of the church. Built around Starr's suggestions, it was a noble Gothic structure seating 1500 people. Christmas stimulated Starr's efforts to gather in the \$70,000 still

needed to leave it free of debt. Dr. Bellows' church in New York was giving a huge baptismal font.

Starr could look forward to the rest he yearned for. He felt so "tired and lonely." An investment made in the Washoe silver mines had given him and his family financial security. He could afford a journey into South America and then to Germany. He could afford time to write a companion volume to *The White Hills* on the wonders of California's Sierra Nevadas. He could even write the book on philosophy which he had dreamed of writing long years before when he was at the Hollis Street Church.

The dedication had to come first. On Sunday, January 10, 1864, he conducted the services. There was no Unitarian colleague near-by to share his joy with him, but his friends in the East remembered the day and sent their congratulatory messages. John Greenleaf Whittier wrote the hymn of dedication.

Starr spoke on "Christian Worship." In it he revealed the joy of accomplishment. He brought his deep learning to bear on the wonders of science for religion. "With the unfolding of truth as universities teach it, and for such purposes, a church has little to do," he said. "But it has a right to use all the truth that science gathers and establishes in illustration of the mind and providence of God. Worship is the exercise which the Church is to sustain. And all the aspects of truth which will bend the mind of man in humility and exalt it in adoration are legitimately within the range of the pulpit, and are, indeed, a portion of its trust. We dedicate this house to the worship of God 'in truth.' "

He swept on to his high conclusion: "I trust and will believe that our new religious home is paid for already in

the generous, if yet uncompleted, purpose of our congregation. I trust and believe that we feel the joy of devoting it to the highest uses and the most sacred truth which the heart of man can serve and the thought of man can entertain. And far above the elements of nobleness and beauty which the genius and skill of man have wrought into its workmanship I trust and pray that the consecrating nobleness and beauty of it may ever be that, in a world of change, and in a city singularly blessed in outward good by the providence of God, it stands devoted to the unchanging love of the Father of all spirits, who accepts and blesses the worship of the humble heart."

His ministry to San Francisco, to California, was nearing its close. Starr felt his loneliness settle on him like the dense fogs which, at times, crept over the city.

The joy of the congregation lived on after the glorious day. The celebrations continued throughout the weeks ahead. On Friday evening, February 26, there was a party in the parish house. Starr had to force himself to be part of the merriment.

On Sunday the church was closed. Starr lay in his bed, gravely ill. The word quickly spread—"pneumonia." He had hardly the strength to battle it. In midweek diphtheria set in. On Friday, March 4th, the second attack of pneumonia struck. He knew death was near-by.

Julia spoke to him of their friends back East. "Tell them," he said to her, "I went lovingly, trustfully, peacefully."

In the evening, he finished his ministry. Jessie Benton Frémont sent word to Julia, "Put violets for me above our friend who rests."

He was thirty-nine years old.

8

Aftermath

California honors the Apostle of Liberty

ON MARCH 5, the *Daily Alta California* devoted most of its huge front page to the solemn theme "Starr King Is Dead." Its columns lined with heavy black, it told the story of the little preacher's last hours. And the Starr King legend made its way into California history.

The *Bulletin* printed Bret Harte's grief-bound tribute:

Came the Relief. "What, Sentry, ho!
How passed the night through the long waking?"
"Cold, cheerless, dark, as may befit
The hour before dawn is breaking."

"No sight or sound?" "No, nothing save
The plover from the marshes calling
And, in yon Western sky, about
An hour ago, a Star was falling."

"A star? There's nothing strange in that."
"No, nothing; but, above the thicket,
Somehow it seemed to me that God
Somewhere had just relieved a Picket."

And in the sorrow-stricken city those words expressed the feeling of the hour.

On Sunday, March 6, Starr King was buried. Bells tolled. Salutes of the cannon were heard. Flags flew at half mast. Over his pulpit, empty now, was draped his gown. There was no colleague to say farewell. The rites were conducted by the preacher's fellow Masons.

In a garden spot, on the grounds of his new church, his body was laid.

In Washington, Abraham Lincoln paused to think about another hero who had fallen in the cause of the Union.

Starr's memory burned deeply. Friends sought to keep it forever alive. In the White Mountains of New Hampshire they named a glorious peak in his honor. At Yosemite, in the high Sierras, another mountain received his name. And one of the giant redwoods in the Mariposa Grove perpetuated his love of the great trees.

The years passed by. New generations grew up in the ever-expanding city. A boy he had known came to the fullness of manhood, following the vocation of the preacher.

Once, on a Friday evening, the conversation had turned on the implications of people's imperfections of speech. The boy had shyly confessed to Starr that he had difficulty with one word: "Re- religion. Somehow I stumble over it, I can't get it out!"

"How sad!" The preacher pretended. "Perhaps it's because you haven't it in you."

The boy, Charles William Wendte, later a great minister in his own right, in 1892, at the dedication of Daniel French's bronze statue of Starr King in Golden Gate Park, paid tribute to the friend of his youth.

This was not all. When the legislature of California

came to the time when it decided upon the two men whose memory was to be perpetuated in Statuary Hall in Congress, it chose Father Junipero Serra, founder of the missions — and Thomas Starr King, who saved California for the Union.

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